



Open Space Committee

Minutes

**Thursday, February 25, 2016, 7:30 pm
Town Hall Annex, First Floor**

Attendees: Ann LeRoyer, Jane Auger, Elizabeth Karpati, John Pickle

Absent: David White, Elena Bartholomew, Joey Glushko, Teresa DeBenedictis

Guests (prospective OSC members): Kelsey Cowen, Wendy Richter, Brian Kelder

The Committee reviewed minutes of the January meeting (by John), but there was not a quorum of official members, so the vote on approval will be postponed.

Committee Membership – Kelsey Cowen and Wendy Richter met with Town Manager and are scheduled to go to the Board of Selectmen for final approval, probably in early March. Ann recommended Brian Kelder to the Manager, and they are meeting with him February 29.

Joey has made some changes to the OSC page on the Town website, to showcase info on the Experiencing Open Spaces app, and it looks good! She will update the membership list when all changes are confirmed.

Joey left one copy of the printed Open Space and Recreation Plan (2015-2022) for the committee to review. She will distribute copies to the Town offices and departments that we had determined previously, and the Planning Department will keep the remaining copies.

Connecting Arlington's Open Spaces – Bad winter weather kept people from doing any walks, but a new emailing to volunteers will encourage testing the prospective routes as spring weather moves in. Ann did take one walk and provided ideas and written suggestions to Kelsey.

Kelsey contacted Stephanie Marlin Curiel from Arlington Cultural Commission to coordinate with them on possible funding to produce maps through Mass Cultural Council. ACC is applying for Cultural District Designation in East Arlington, overlapping our walking routes. The ACC's next meeting is on March 14, and Kelsey will try to go to find out more information.

Picture Post expansion to more sites is on hold due to weather, but plans are to set up three possible locations of posts around the Reservoir; John will be presenting information at EcoFest 2016 on March 19.

Nine Community Preservation Act projects have been submitted to that committee. OSC was asked for a support letter for a proposed Spy Pond erosion study, sponsored by the Conservation Commission and Friends of Spy Pond Park. Ann sent a letter on behalf of the OSC. The other open space project includes work at Robbins Farm. The seven other proposals address affordable housing and historic preservation projects.

Town Meeting articles include several open-space related articles, and we may want to comment on some of them. Most critical is an article (#30) to transfer some land at Mount Gilboa – 10.7 acres of protected conservation land with one single-family house at top – to the Arlington Housing Authority for affordable housing. This complicated idea is mainly to ensure that the Town can comfortably exceed the state threshold of 1.5% of approved land area with affordable housing, as a way to prevent future 40B developments. We discussed the issues and agreed such an idea completely contradicts the goals of the Open Space and Recreation Plan, and other town policies. Wendy will check on the status of Great Meadows as part of the calculation for Arlington's land area.

Another new idea for Mt. Gilboa is to create an accessible vista park at the top of the hill with additional parking to provide more opportunities for residents to visit and enjoy the conservation land. This might involve tearing down the house, or converting it to public use.

We made our farewells to Elizabeth Karpati, as this was her last meeting before she moves to Maryland to live with her sister. We gave her a small gift and goodbye cards.

2016 Meetings

March 24, April 28, May 26, June 23, July (TBD), August (TBD), September 22, October 27, November 10, December 8

Minutes prepared by John Pickle